

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

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1. An image forming apparatus comprising:
deciphering means for receiving and deciphering
enciphered data; and
printing means for printing enciphered data on a
10 recording medium.

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2. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
claim 1, further comprising:
request generating means for requesting the
enciphered data with respect to an external server.

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3. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
claim 1, further comprising:
25 key generating means for generating an enciphering

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key for use in an enciphering process carried out in an external server which provides the enciphered data.

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4. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said key generating means generates the enciphering key based on information peculiar to the image forming apparatus.

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5. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein said key generating means generates the enciphering key based on information peculiar to the image forming apparatus and a random variable.

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6. An image forming apparatus comprising:
deciphering means for receiving and deciphering
enciphered data;

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processing means for updating software or updating
a version of a program based on deciphered data; and
printing means for printing data on a recording
medium.

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7. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
10 claim 6, further comprising:

request generating means for requesting the
enciphered data with respect to an external server.

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8. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
claim 6, further comprising:

key generating means for generating an enciphering
20 key for use in an enciphering process carried out in an
external server which provides the enciphered data.

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a deciphering step receiving and deciphering the enciphered data in an apparatus which at least has a

printing function; and

a printing step printing deciphered data on a recording medium in the apparatus.

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12. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 11, further comprising:

10 a request generating step requesting the enciphered data with respect to an external server.

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13. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said request generating step generates the request from a terminal equipment which is coupled to the apparatus and is capable of
20 accessing the server.

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14. The enciphered data processing method as

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claimed in claim 12, wherein said request generating step generates the request from the apparatus which is capable of accessing the server.

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15. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 11, further comprising:

10 a key generating step generating an enciphering key which is used by said transmitting step, in the apparatus.

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16. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said key generating step generates the enciphering key based on information

20 peculiar to the apparatus.

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17. The enciphered data processing method as

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claimed in claim 15, wherein said key generating step generates the enciphering key based on information peculiar to the apparatus and a random variable.

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18. An enciphered data processing method comprising:

10 a requesting step requesting data with respect to a server;

a transmitting step enciphering requested data in the server and transmitting enciphered data via a network;

15 a deciphering step receiving and deciphering the enciphered data in an apparatus which at least has a printing function; and

a processing step updating software or updating a version of a program based on deciphered data.

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19. The enciphered data processing method as
25 claimed in claim 18, further comprising:

a request generating step requesting the enciphered data with respect to an external server.

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20. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 19, wherein said request generating step generates the request from a terminal equipment which is coupled to the apparatus and is capable of accessing the server.

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21. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 19, wherein said request generating step generates the request from the apparatus which is capable of accessing the server.

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22. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 18, further comprising:

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a key generating step generating an enciphering key which is used by said transmitting step, in the apparatus.

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23. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said key generating step
10 generates the enciphering key based on information peculiar to the apparatus.

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24. The enciphered data processing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said key generating step
generates the enciphering key based on information peculiar to the apparatus and a random variable.

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25 25. An enciphered data processing system comprising:

request means for requesting data with respect to a server;

transmitting means for enciphering requested data in the server and transmitting enciphered data via a network;

deciphering means for receiving and deciphering the enciphered data in an apparatus which at least has a printing function; and

printing means for printing deciphered data on a recording medium in the apparatus.

26. The enciphered data processing system as claimed in claim 25, wherein said requesting means is provided in a terminal equipment which is coupled to the apparatus and is capable of accessing the server.

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27. The enciphered data processing system as claimed in claim 25, wherein said requesting means is provided in the apparatus which is capable of accessing

the server.

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28. The enciphered data processing system as claimed in claim 25, further comprising:

key generating means for generating an enciphering key which is used by said transmitting means, in the
10 apparatus.

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29. An enciphered data processing system comprising:

requesting means for requesting data with respect to a server;

transmitting means for enciphering requested data
20 in the server and transmitting enciphered data via a network;

deciphering means for receiving and deciphering the enciphered data in an apparatus which at least has a printing function; and

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processing means for updating software or updating

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a version of a program in the apparatus based on
deciphered data.

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30. The enciphered data processing system as
claimed in claim 29, wherein said requesting means is
provided in a terminal equipment which is coupled to the
10 apparatus and is capable of accessing the server.

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31. The enciphered data processing system as
claimed in claim 29, wherein said requesting means is
provided in the apparatus which is capable of accessing
the server.

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32. The enciphered data processing system as
claimed in claim 29, further comprising:

25 key generating means for generating an enciphering

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key which is used by said transmitting means, in the apparatus.

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